

From: Nicole Barrows
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 11/30/01 4:36am
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

To whom it may concern:

The concept of MS supplying schools with software is inherently flawed for several reasons:

1: It costs them essentially nothing and hence is not a punishment. 5000 hackers could supply schools with MS operating systems for free if they wanted to break the law, which (as the DOJ has proven) MS does on a daily basis

2: It reduces the competition by essentially "brainwashing" students and parents alike. Children who use MS products at school are more likely to have MS products at home. Parents who buy their children computers will be more likely to buy MS products not because the products are good (from a programming aspect, they are not), but because of an "If it's good enough for the schools, it's good enough at home" mentality.

3: Using differing operating systems is much like speaking differing languages. The earlier children are exposed to different languages (or operating systems) the more fluent they become. My oldest child is eight years old and is comfortable using MS-DOS, TRS-DOS, Amiga Workbench, HP-UNIX, various flavors Linux and the all of the MS Windows operating systems and graphic user interfaces.

4: An unnamed software company has offered to supply operating systems for free if MS spends its money on hardware instead of software. This will expose more students to differing operating systems, allow more computers to be placed in schools and the operating system they wish to supply is more powerful than ANY operating system MS currently has on the market. It is very similar to the OS I use at work for digital powerplant and substation control. I use their OS to train future powerplant operators.

5: When is the last time you have heard of a UNIX, Linux or Workbench OS computer having virus problems? Giving MS software to schools is just providing the schools with more ways to acquire unwanted viruses.

6: MS networking is a real nightmare. Networking with UNIX and Linux is much easier and is completely compatible with both MS and Macintosh networks.

In short, just because something is free doesn't mean it is good. A punishment without sacrifice is not punishment. Providing competition cannot be achieved by providing more market share to the offender.

Sincerely,
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